

Zealousy

**An Honors Thesis (HONR 499)**

**By**

Joshua D. Savage

**Thesis Advisor**

Professor Dominic Caristi

Signed

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## Zealousy Abstract

By Josh Savage

In the music industry, artists are using technology to express emotions and tell stories in ways that were never possible 50 years ago. Although most music videos feature the artists themselves, film technology has made it possible to craft creative stories without always making a musician's cameo. In marketing a musician's personal brand, diversification away from the standard is necessary to potentially segment the market, thus creating a new niche market and possible fans. The quality of music production for a video relies on synchronization of sight and sound, so that the emotions felt can be solidified with both senses. The video section of the thesis compiles elements of music video design with newer technology such as a green screen with creative and relatable storytelling. In regards to the video's story, originality, rhetorical devices, and aesthetics are utilized to solidify the overall theme and feel, strengthening the impact of the musician's song.

### Acknowledgements

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### Author's Statement

The goal of the thesis is to portray a creative story with purposeful, accompanying music. A secondary goal is to show how a musician can express himself and gain personal brand equity through the mode of digital video. Utilizing advanced film technology in conjunction with creative storytelling can show positively on a musician's work, providing an experience for fans to enjoy. In order to understand the concepts above in regards to the thesis, a short walkthrough of the video is needed.

The story starts out with a lone, mysterious man on a couch. He increasingly gains curious interest in an old black and white film, showing a scene with men scurrying in fear on the television screen, giving him a peculiar idea of self-actualization. The rising action is preceded by the antagonist's smirk, in which all color around him is drained to black and white; this desaturation shows a change in mindset. The video follows this man, the antagonist, through his treacherous plan to self-actualize as the antagonist in many old film productions. As the action rises, the antagonist is shown mixing chemicals needed to create chloroform. Meanwhile, the video shows the man searching for a victim, which happens to be a girl whom he notices from across the street. He sees the girl exit her house and later proceeds to break in when she leaves. His intentions don't go unnoticed, as there is a mysterious bystander in a white trench coat that sees the antagonist's evil look. The bystander, the protagonist, leaves the scene. When the girl returns to her house, she gets captured by the creepy antagonist. Soon after, the protagonist busts in the girl's door and realizes that she's been taken, so he decides to pursue the trail. The final scene shows the antagonist driving to a location near railroad tracks, where he ties her up in wire and puts her on the tracks. The antagonist senses somebody near, so he turns around to reveal the protagonist behind him. A fight ensues, starting with the antagonist throwing winning punches. After a cue in the music, the protagonist gains an advantage in the fight; the

antagonist shows resentment, in which he pulls out a knife. There is a struggle as the knife is thrown around from side to side. Finally, the knife is thrown out of the antagonist's hands. At the end of the scene, the antagonist is struck hard by the protagonist, revealing partial color in the protagonist's face. Then, the protagonist lets out a huge uppercut, which brings back color to the world and sends the antagonist flying through the air to his demise.

There are several themes in *Zealousy*, including self-actualization and balances of the universe. In the beginning, the antagonist self-actualizes into the bad guy; the black and white is a reflection of how he sees the world around him. As he does things that add to his character, the world is turned more black and white. For example, when he uses the chloroform on the girl, the scene turns black and white, as she becomes a part of his master plan. The dynamic of desaturation is the most towards the end fight scene, when the entire world is like the old movies. The protagonist decides to actualize into the good guy fighting for the damsel in distress, which is shown by his face turning black and white. When the protagonist finishes off the antagonist at the end, saturation returns to the world and the antagonist's self-actualization is no more.

When there is an action, there is an equal reaction that happens elsewhere. The "balances of the universe" theme is shown through a protagonist appearing out of the cosmos to contend against the antagonist. If a great evil spawns somewhere, a great good must balance the scale. Another motif used plays on the old black and white films with good and bad guys fighting over damsels in distress. The aesthetic of old-timey fight scenes was heavily emphasized in the end, as if the entire climax was an actual old black and white film. The music video plays on the fact that the time period is current, but all the events lead to the old-timey ending fight scene. When the antagonist dies, his death is comical and over-exaggerated like the old movies. The manner of which he dies resolves tension in the audience and balance is restored.

In regards to the video portion of the thesis, the song provides the necessary cues for the events in the story. Although it would be trite to state every single cue and individual purpose, it is important to mention that this track was made for the video. There is no narration or sound effects other than the backing track, so it was necessary to line up the events with percussion and synthetic effects. The dialectic tension portrayed in the story is emphasized by rising wind sounds and cymbal crashes in transition, while most of the action and tension release happens during the intense orchestral section (3:21-4:47).

From a marketing perspective, all visual and auditory elements from above comprise the overall effect of the production. To compete in the music industry, a musician must go above and beyond expectations to help consumers create demand for their product. In this thesis, the goal was to aim for synchronization with the audience's sight and sound. Composing the music for a video without narration creates the need for a composer who can translate moods, tensions, and raw emotions into bars of music. If synchronization of sight and sound are achieved, the production should be entertaining to watch. When a musician can express himself in a creative way that has never been done before, it potentially adds equity into their name, creating consumer demand. Once the product is assured of quality, then it is the marketer's job to advertise and create awareness for the production. My development as an artist through this thesis project has been drastic, as it gives me a high-quality music video to use in my music career. Although profits won't be made from this video, I'm expecting my brand equity to rise substantially after it is released on YouTube. As a marketer and musician, this project was an overall positive experience that my fans and I will be able to cherish for years to come.

## Works Cited

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